

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-10

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R 161541Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1629

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 10195

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECIN, AORG, NI

SUBJECT: ECOWAS: CONVERSATION WITH TOGOLESE AMBASSADOR APEDO-AMAH

1. ECOWAS: TOGO IS ANXIOUS TO GET THE ORGANIZATION MOVING AND IS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT NIGERIA'S ATTITUDE. APEDO-AMAH SAYS NIGERIAN COMMISSIONER GARBA LEAVES LAGOS OCTOBER 23 FOR EXTENSIVE SWING BY NIGERIAN MILITARY PLANE THROUGH ECOWAS CAPITALS. WHEREAS IN FIRST WEEKS AFTER NIGERIAN COUP ECOWAS
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SUPPORTERS FEARED A LACK OF INTEREST ON PART OF NEW NIGERIAN

REGIME, NOW SOME OF THEM FORESEE AGGRESSIVE NIGERIAN EFFORT SEEK HEADQUARTERS SITE OR SECRETARY GENERALSHIP. APEDO-AMAH HAS BEEN TOLD BY GARBA THAT NIGERIA WILL CAMPAIGN FOR SITE. TOGO VERY MUCH WANTS IT FOR LOME, WITH ACCRA SECOND BEST, AND WILL PUSH ISSUE TO FORMAL ECOWAS VOTE IF NECESSARY ALTHOUGH WOULD MUCH PREFERE CONSENSUS AGREEMENT. IN EVENT ACCRA SHOULD BE SELECTED FOR SEAT, TOGO WOULD PUSH FOR TOGOLESE SECRETARY GENERAL. AGAIN TOGO WOULD SUPPORT GHANA OVER NIGERIA. NO OTHER CANDIDATES EXCEPT DAHOMEY CURRENTLY ON HORIZON FOR SECRETARY GENERAL, AND "A DAHOMEAN WOULD BE LUDICROUS." MONROVIA IS IN RUNNING FOR SITE BUT APEDO AMAH THINKS IT IS NOT A CONTENDER TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY MOST MEMBERS. PART OF TOGOLESE ANIMUS AGAINST NIGERIA IS DUE TO NIGERIAN "PERFIDY" ON PART OF FORMER FINANCE MINISTER SHEGARI, WHO ASSURED TOGO THAT TOGO WOULD NOT ANTAGONIZE GHANA BY SUPPORTING A NIGERIAN TO REPLACE LABIDI AS AFRICAN BANK DIRECTOR. TOGOLESE SUBSEQUENTLY DISMAYED TO FIND THEMSELVES CAUGHT IN MIDDLE OF GHANIAN/NIGERIAN CONFRONTATION ON THE ISSUE.

2. GHANA: NEW CAST OF CHARACTERS SHOWS MORE TALENT AND ABILITY THAN PREDECESSORS. ROBERT GARDNER, HOWEVER, DOES NOT HAVE THE ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF HIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY.

3. DAHOMEY: RUSSIANS ARE VERY DISCRETE ABOUT THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR MARXIST-LENINIST PUPILS BUT OUGHT TO BE EMBARRASSED BY THE MAD NONSENSE OF PRESENT COTONOU REGIME.

4. USE OF TOGOLESE PORTS AND HIGHWAYS FOR NIGERIA-BOUND CARGO: EARLY ARRIVALS OF NIGERIAN CARGO AT LOME CLOGGED THE STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION FACILITIES BECAUSE NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES WERE SLOW TO ASSURE ADEQUATE TRUCKING TO CARRY THE CARGO AWAY. THIS PROBLEM NO LONGER SO SERIOUS, AND TRANSIT TRUCKING FROM GHANA SUFFICIENTLY SPREAD OUT THAT TOGOLESE HIGHWAY SYSTEM NOT UNDULY BURDENED. MAJOR BOTTLENECK AT MOMENT IS NIGERIAN BORDER CROSSING FROM DAHOMEY WHERE 65 TRUCKS CURRENTLY BEING HELD UP BY NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES WHO ARE INSISTING ON SUCH SILLY REQUIREMENTS AS INTERNATIONAL DIRVERS LICENSES FROM GHANIAN TRUCK DRIVERS.

5. APEDO-AMAH WAS TOGOLESE FOREIGN MINISTER 1963-67 UNDER GRUNITZKY. HE HAS BEEN AMBASSADOR HERE FOR TWO AND ONE HALF CONFIDENTIAL

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(2 1/2) YEARS. HE DOES NOT HIDE HIS DISTASTE FOR NIGERIAN INEFFICIENCY AND CORRUPTION, AND GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF BEING BOTH ENVIOUS AND FEARFUL OF NIGERIA'S STRENGTH AND INFLUENCE. HE IS WARY OF PREDICTING THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW REGIME, AND VOICES ALARM AT THE CONTINUING WAVE OF DISMISSALS FROM PUBLIC SERVICE WITHOUT ADEQUATE EXPLANATIONS TO THE PUBLIC.

6. QUESTION. IS THE REQUIREMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DRIVERS
LICENSES COMPATIBLE WITH THE ECOWAS PRINCIPLE OF FREE MOVMENT OF
PEOPLE AND GOODS?

7. ANSWER. ECOWAS WILL HAVE PLENTY OF THINGS TO WORK ON.
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